

## B is for Blindness by [lilies\\_in\\_a\\_vase](#)

**Series:** [Lilies' Alphabet Soup of Pain \[2\]](#)

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**Summary:**

After an AIDS/HIV Protest gone badly, Billy wakes in total darkness with Jonathan the only one in his hospital room.

## B is for Blindness

### Author's Note:

#### TRIGGER WARNING:

Some references to Neil being abusive in the past, cops being shit, and Billy being injured.

So, this is post canon, in a universe where Joyce and Hopper got married, adopted Billy (and Joyce adopted El) and they're all a happy family. The teens all go to college now, and Robin, Steve, and Billy share an apartment.

I hope you guys like it!

#### Disclaimer:

I don't own "Stranger Things".

When Billy first wakes up, to the overpowering smell of antiseptic and the slow realisation that he *can't see anything*, he, well, panics.

At first, he doesn't even know if his eyes are open at all, and that's disorienting enough, but then, he starts to realise that there is something covering them, something thick and soft that won't let him blink, won't let him open them fully.

Next, he realises he's lying down, his back slightly propped up, on a bed, and that, combined with the way his whole body is filled with a muted ache, clues him in that he's in the hospital.

Which doesn't exactly make him panic any less.

Because the last time Billy ended up in the hospital, he'd just been skewered by a real, actual, *fucking* monster which'd been possessing him for the better part of a week, with his hands bandaged and his body too weak to even sit up. He'd had to re-learn how to write. How to fucking *walk*.

And before that, well, before that, ending up in the hospital just meant that either his dad had screwed up real bad, or Billy had been a goddamn pussy that couldn't deal with a little pain like a man, and that meant that as soon as he was released he could be expecting a date with Neil's fist.

So.

Hospital's aren't Billy's friend.

He sucks in a sharp breath, glad he can at least breathe on his own, and oh. There's a hand on his chest. Another hand holding his right one.

Sound is the last thing to filter in.

"Billy? Billy, hey, can you hear me? Billy?"

*Jonathan.*

“Johnny.” Billy winches at the sound of his own voice. It sounds like he’s been coughing up rocks.

“Fuck,” Jonathan breathes out, and the hand on his chest is gone. Billy hears him fall into a chair next to his bed, the right side. He’s still holding tight to Billy’s hand.

“Jon-“ he starts, breaths still stuttering and shaky. “Jonathan... My eyes...?”

Jonathan squeezes his hand. “You’re okay,” he’s quick to reassure. “They’re okay. You got- Do you remember what happened?”

Billy sinks back against the pillows and tries to think back to the last thing he remembers. “... The protest?”

“Yeah,” Jonathan breathes. Billy doesn’t think he’s heard him sound this emotional since he called them a couple months back to let them know Nancy said yes to his proposal. He sounds like he’s about to cry. “Yeah, yeah, that’s right.”

And he’s still holding Billy’s hand.

Suddenly, Billy’s filled with panic for an entirely different reason. “Steve?” he asks. “Shit, Robin? Jonathan, are they alright?!”

Jonathan's other hand joins his first one, and Billy feels like his heart is about to crack.

"They're okay. They're both alright. Robin's got a bruise from where she hit a cop, but they're fine."

Billy lifts his other hand - its got an IV in it, but to hell with it - and tries to swat at Jonathan. It doesn't work that well, because Billy can't see him, so he mostly ends up catching empty air and the edge of Jonathan's sweater.

"Then why the hell do you sound so wrecked for?!"

"Jesus," Jonathan laughs shakily, sounding slightly incredulous. "Because when I first saw you in here, I had to step out and call Nancy to calm me down from the little breakdown I was about to have in the goddamn hospital, and then I had to call Hop to cuss out the fucking police and mum took the phone from him when she heard us plotting how to best cover up the murder of whoever authorised the fucking Indianapolis police force, and then I had to call Will, and El, and your sister. They're all on their way, by the way."

"Shit."

"Yeah," Jonathan does another one of those shaky little laughs. Billy thinks it's the closest Jonathan will get to sky ding hysterical. "How's it feel having people caring about you, Billy?"

Billy only squeezes his hand in answer. "You still haven't told me what happened."

"The protest turned into a bit of a riot, and the police got violent, and a can of tear gas got deployed right next to you, you got hit in the head or face or eye or something and passed out."

"How long was I out?" Robin had told them she'd read about tear gas, that it burns, and had brought a pair of swimming goggles with her. Billy had laughed at her when she'd put them on, told her she looked silly, had reached for one of Steve's scarfs and tied it around his neck, said it would be fine. It wasn't supposed to be a violent protest. At least half of the people there were already grieving.

But then again, Billy would be the one to know how quickly sadness can turn to anger. Not that he'd be shocked if it were the cops that started it. Billy may have been adopted by the Chief of Police, but he is also gay, and a college student, a fan of trash metal, and he's been to the Castro District during the summer. He's not stupid.

"I don't know," Jonathan says. "Robin and Steve got separated from you. Some... Some guy, he didn't see you and stepped on you, broke a rib. He dragged you away, out of the chaos and you were still out when Robin saw the two of you, and then Steve found you, and he carried you all the way here, and... shit, Billy, I'm so sorry. They wouldn't let him stay. Robin, she said they were showed away by some nurse, because they weren't family and they were in the way because they had other protesters and... *shit*."

"It's not your fault."

“No, I- I know. It’s just... it’s shit.”

Billy chuckles. “Yeah. Yeah, it is. Did you call them?”

“Of course.”

“And my profess- Shit, is it still Saturday? I’ve got class on Monday.”

“Jesus fucking Christ, Billy,” Jonathan laughs. “Only you would... Yes, it’s still Saturday, and yes, I called your professors. You didn’t tell me one of them was such a bitch.”

“Professor Campbell?” Billy asks.

“Yeah.”

“Did she tell me it was my own fault, going to protests at the weekend, and that I’ll have to deal with the consequences and she wouldn’t give me any extensions?”

“She did, yes. All of that.”

“She’s an old hag. But she really knows her subject, so. I actually think I’m one of her favourites.”

Jonathan scoffs. "Of course you do."

Billy grins. "Yep. And the Hippies?"

'The Hippies', as Billy and his classmates lovingly refer to them, are a married couple that teach in the same department. Because they're married, and thus share a surname, they go by their first names, although they still insist on the 'Dr' because 'We didn't do all that studying for those doctorates not to get to use them, kids'. They're tattooed, long haired, and Billy is convinced they've both tried every drug on the planet at least ones, if only just to be able to tell the current generation which to definitely, absolutely, avoid.

"They wanted me to tell you not to worry about class, that they'll give you however long you need to complete the work, and that they wish you a speedy recovery. Oh, and also, that they're 'very proud of you' for protesting."

Billy smiles, and they fall silent for a while after that.

"I am, too," Jonathan then says. "Proud of you, that is. Just next time, call me and Nancy. If nothing else, I can get some great shots and Nance can write an article about how fucking shit everything is, and then we'll send it in to some newspaper or publish it in the school paper, if nothing else. I mean, she's in charge of it, what can they do? Stop her?"

"I don't think anyone can stop Nancy when she sets her mind to



something,” Billy says, thinking about the girl who fought monsters and then immediately reached for one of Hop’s guns when she heard about what Neil did to him. She’d told him Hop wouldn’t stop her, if she somehow got Neil out in the woods and shot him. Billy had told her he felt better knowing Neil would be rotting in prison for years, surrounded by people who for all their crimes, still most hated child abusers.

“I think you’re right,” Jonathan says, and Billy can hear the smile in his voice. “But I mean. I’m proud of you, but next time, I want to be there with you. We’re stronger together, the five of us.”

Billy squeezes his hand. “Thank you.”

### **Author's Note:**

Thanks for reading and please do let me know what you thought (also, if anyone’s got any ideas for words that start with Z, I’d be very happy to hear them! All I’m coming up with is ‘zoo’ and ‘zombie’)!